

BREAKING THE SILENCE

A publication of The Children's Assessment Center, a safe place serving Harris County's sexually abused children.

The mission of The Children's Assessment Center is to provide a professional, compassionate and coordinated approach to the treatment of sexually abused children and their families and to serve as an advocate for all children in our community.

Katrina - A Frontline Perspective...

As Director of Therapy and Psychological Services for The Children's Assessment Center (CAC), I am keenly aware of much in the way of human suffering. However, as I reflect upon time spent with Hurricane Katrina survivors at Reliant Park, I've come to realize that nothing in my life had prepared me for the sheer magnitude of physical and emotional hardship I would come to witness.

Grief, depression, despair, anxiety, dehydration, hunger, fatigue – all terms I said and heard thousands of times while I and other mental health professionals struggled to make sense of the unspeakable human suffering we saw before us. One person mired in a place of physical and mental anguish is too many. Thousands in such despair is a difficult concept to maneuver one's mind around.

I was equally unprepared for the truly miraculous transformation from trauma to more emotional stability I observed as evacuees received the mental, physical and basic care services so desperately needed. Children, barefoot for days now had shoes. Children and adults, whose mental health needs had taken a back seat as they sought help for physical traumas were finally able to receive crisis counseling with the message of hope inherent in such counseling. Family members separated from one another during the disaster and subsequent evacuation tearfully reunited with those they held dear.

Only through selfless teamwork and sacrifice could the needs of so many be met by so few, and I consider myself fortunate to have stood beside friends and colleagues from The CAC, the larger local community, and abroad in successfully meeting the needs of Katrina survivors.

Lawrence Thompson, Jr., Ph.D.

*Director of Therapy and Psychological Services
The Children's Assessment Center*



Crisis counseling by CAC therapists greeted thousands of Katrina evacuees as they settled into their temporary home in the Astrodome.



Crisis counseling services and more were provided by clinicians and other members of The CAC.

Lawrence Thompson, Jr., Director of Therapy and Psychological Services for The CAC, huddles with Executive Director Elaine Stoltz and Assistant Director Kathy Wells to discuss services for Katrina survivors.

Alongside CAC personnel were hundreds of other city, county, and state practitioners, as well as clinicians and volunteers hailing from throughout the United States. For any who read this, you have my eternal gratitude and respect. We all have much to celebrate and to be proud of. I cannot imagine a more thoughtful and competent response to the staggering needs of over thirty thousand evacuees. In this grand endeavor, we have positively altered the course of countless lives.

And so, having witnessed all this, I am humbled and inspired by the indomitable human spirit and the immeasurable bounds of human generosity. It is these sometimes forgotten attributes I believe define us as human beings and that similarly define both the Katrina relief effort and each person who gave of themselves in some precious way.



CAC Therapist Alberta Torres and Katrina volunteers prepare for the next wave of evacuees seeking mental health services at Reliant Center.

In this grand endeavor, we have positively altered the course of countless lives.



Hello everyone,

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, *"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have too*

much; it is whether we provide enough to those who have too little."

This theme was definitely echoed throughout the Houston Community during Hurricane Katrina. I was truly amazed and continue to be impressed by the altruism demonstrated by each and every one of us here in Houston – we are truly a community of spirit and compassion.

On August 31, 2005, The Children's Assessment Center received a phone call from Judge Eckels' office asking for our assistance with the children and families being evacuated from New Orleans. When I arrived at the Transtar building that morning, it was clear many others received the same early morning phone call. Within hours an impressive team of dedicated officials and staff were organized to begin Day 1 of the Katrina Evacuation Plan. On behalf of the other Youth and Family Service Agencies in Harris County, The CAC would be organizing the infrastructure and implement a plan to address the mental health needs of the children and families coming in from New Orleans. This would be a component of the medical clinic being set up in the Arena under the direction of Dr. Herminia Palacios, Executive Director, Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, and Dr. Umair Shah, Deputy Director, Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services.

Within hours we had our own mini-team set up, making phone calls and setting up a system of licensed mental health professionals who would assist the children and families. At 2:00 a.m., the following morning, we had staff waiting for the distraught and weary arriving from the Superdome, the first of

475 buses. We worked around the clock setting up 24-hour shifts of trained mental health professionals, who came in from a number of organizations, agencies, non-profits, not only from Texas, but from across the United States. Some of our 24 hour shifts had over 100 clinicians working to meet the immediate mental health needs of literally thousands of children and families. Initially providing crisis counseling for many who were traumatized and suffering from basic anxiety, depression and or fear. Our newly created crisis teams of dedicated individuals provided them with the support they needed and assisted them with their number 1 priority – finding loved ones.

The sheer magnitude and scope of this project was something I don't believe any of us could even imagine until we were there living it and breathing it each day. The number of lives we touched throughout the next two weeks was overwhelming, challenging, sad, and had each of us thinking and feeling . . . this really could be us and if so . . . how would we want our neighbors to react to our natural disaster? How would our sons, daughters, children and grandparents be cared for if we were unable to do so?

The professional manner in which we reacted to this crisis demonstrated that we live in a community that is not afraid to help those in need.

I am so incredibly proud of our staff, Judge Eckels and the other county and city officials who provided the leadership for Harris County and the City of Houston to accomplish this incredible and once in a lifetime endeavor. Without any doubt, I am convinced we saved lives, provided hope and healing and above all, instilled the compassion of giving to "those who have too little." This instilled compassion will be reflected in generations to come. We, as a community have much to be proud of.

Elaine Stolte, Executive Director
elaine_stolte@cac.co.harris.tx.us



CAC Assistant Director **Kathy Wells** confers with **Senator John Cornyn** outside the Reliant Center



Above: **Dr. Herminia Palacios**, Executive Director, Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services, and Deputy Director **Dr. Umair Shah** lead Harris County's medical response to the Katrina Recovery effort.



Congressional Art Contest



The brother of Art Contest winner Taylor Haunschild's proudly displays the "My Brother" piece he inspired. Also pictured are SW Airlines Rep. Silke Gloeckner, Ginnie Haunschild, and Congressional Art Contest Sponsor – Congressman John Culberson.

Artistic excellence was on full display during the 2005 Congressional Art Contest held in June at The CAC. Congratulations to all the competitors and winners who were

recognized at a June 1st reception featuring Congressman John Culberson. First place in the contest went to Kincaid School Sr. Taylor Hauschild, for her piece titled "My Brother." This year 25 young artists, representing high schools in District 7 were competing to win the 2005 Competition, as determined by a panel of judges.

The Congressional Arts Competition was initiated by Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to showcase an outstanding work of art from a talented high school student in their district. The winning work of art, including Taylor's, are prominently displayed in the Capitol for a full year, during which time they will be viewed by thousands of visitors to our capitol, as well as our nation's leaders.

Taylor also received three round-trip airline tickets to Washington, donated by Southwest Airlines, to attend the dedication ceremony. Unable to attend the event, Taylor's brother, inspiration for the winning piece accepted the award from the Congressman on her behalf.

Finishing in second and third place respectively were Julia Doubleday of Episcopal High School and Leah Klein, also of Episcopal. Leah not only had her immediate family with her, but grandparents as well. It was a festive evening dedicated to the creativity of young American artists, all of whom are bound for great accomplishments in years to come.

Protecting Texas Children



Keynote Speaker Congressman Ted Poe is bordered on the left by Chief of Staff Heather Graham, and on the right by Beaumont's Garth House Director, Marion Tanner.

Conference: Law Enforcement Investigation & Child Fatality Review," this year's conference was attended by more than 200 professionals from across the state. 2005 also marked the first time The CAC partnered with Texas' Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) in coordinating the conference.

A diverse group of professionals comprised an eager audience, though law enforcement agencies represented a solid majority. Other disciplines represented were Children's Protective Services, Children's Advocacy Center's, Forensic Nurses, Pediatricians, Clinicians, District Attorney's offices, Public Health professionals, Fire Fighters, Educators and various other child advocates. Feedback from those attending gave consistently high marks for the quality of speakers and depth of the presentations.

A welcome from CAC Executive Director Elaine Stolte kicked off the two-day conference featuring special presentations by Congressman

The CAC's reputation for training excellence continued to grow during the 7th Annual Conference to Advance Child Abuse Investigation held July 18-19 at the Crown Plaza Hotel in downtown Houston. Titled "Protecting Texas Children

Ted Poe; Rick Distaso and Birgit Fladager of Stanislaus County Prosecutors (Scott Peterson Case); Dr. Dwayne Wolf, Sr. Deputy Chief with the Harris County Medical Examiner's Office; and Dr. Lawrence Thompson, Director of Therapy and Psychological Services for The CAC.

Conference Sponsors supporting The CAC and Texas Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) include the Harris County District Attorney's Office, Texas Department of Health, Houston/Harris County Child Fatality Review Team. And a special thank you goes to the Houston Young Lawyers' Foundation, (HYLF) for funding multiple conference scholarships.

With another successful conference behind them, planning is already underway for 2006.



Harris County District Attorney Chuck Rosenthal and John Moss, Chief of Staff for State Senator Kyle Janek between sessions at The CAC's Annual Law Enforcement Conference.

Tootsies

A Tootsies style show to get you “perfectly prepared” for the start of the 2005 Polo season... that was the plan at the “Martini’s, Bellini’s & Shopping In-Betweenies” event held at Tootsies on August 22nd. Dozens of supporters representing Houston Polo Club and The Children’s Assessment Center attended the record breaking event.

Organized by special event Chair Becky Nash and coordinated by Tootsies’ Shelley Taylor Ludwig, the evenings total more than doubled that of similar events with a percentage of all sales going to The Children’s Assessment Center.

Guests mingled among fashion and friends including Polo Italia & Risotto Festival Chairs Alicia and Lance Smith, and Tami and Lee Pearson and CAC Executive Director Elaine Stolte.

Prior to the style show, a party for Polo/Risotto event Underwriters was held just south of Tootsies at Smith & Wollensky. An amazing buffet of assorted cuisine was provided courtesy of Carolyn Stone and Christian

Escudie, PR Director for Smith & Wollensky. Full of delicious food and drinks, the crowd made their way over to Tootsies where guests enjoyed an informal Tootsies style show and shopping for the latest trends...

The spectacular Pre-Polo evening, could not have happened without the support of Mickey Rosmarin, owner of Tootsies as well as the staff of Smith & Wollensky. Congratulations and thanks to Becky Nash, our Polo Co-Chairs and the entire Polo/Risotto Committee for organizing such a fun filled evening.



2005 Polo Italia & Risotto Festival Co-Chairs Alicia Smith and Tami Pearson are all smiles at the Smith & Wollensky Underwriter Party.



Mr. Bill Wright arrives at Smith & Wollensky with CAC Development Director Susan Williams.



CAC supporter Liz Loucks and Event Chair Becky Nash are in good spirits at the Tootsies Style Show benefiting The CAC.



2005 Polo Italia & Risotto Festival Honorees Jay and Linda Comeux prepare for a night of fun, food and fashion...



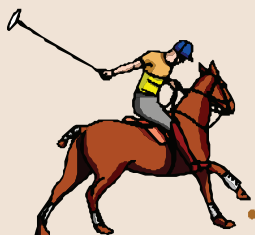
Mary Lane and CAC Event Coordinator Lisa Bourgoynne.



Polo Committee member Terri Hudler Hull and husband Kurt join in the party at Smith & Wollensky.



A gracious host, Christian Escudie, Public Relations Director for Smith & Wollensky greets guests as they arrive for the Polo/Risotto Underwriter's party at the famous steak house on Westheimer.



Fashion, fun, hugs and smiles for Kim and Dan Moody during The Tootsies Style Show.



Tijana Stolte shows off one of Tootsies latest creation.



Picking Raffle winners are Tootsies Manager Shelley Taylor Ludwig and 2005 Polo Co-Chair Lee Pearson.



Lindsay Pearson and Sarah Kaplan strike a pose with Tootsies latest fashions.

CAMP ESTELLE

Happy Campers!! That's the goal of the annual CAC Summer Camp for children aged 8-15. 51 young CAC clients avoided the summer doldrums while spending a week at Camp HS Estelle in June. Camp Estelle is part of The Extension Service at Prairie View A&M University.

Prior to their June 27th departure on charter buses, campers received duffle-bags filled with supplies, including sleeping bags, personal care items, and disposable cameras. Camp supplies were put together by volunteers from The National Charity League, "Heart of Texas" Chapter. Campers received a personal escort all the way to Huntsville courtesy of the Houston Chapter of Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA).

For many it was their first toasted marshmallow, their first horseback ride, and maybe even their first time outside the city limits... Camp Estelle provides separate dorms for boys and girls. In addition to riding horses, activities included arts and crafts, swimming, running the R.O.P.E.S. course, talent show, and of course, swimming.

A reluctant return on July 1st saw tired but happy smiles as they returned just in time for a July 4th weekend!! The most common

question: "Can I come back next year?" That's music to the ears of Lisa Andrews Baldwin, Laura Broussard, Karen Kennard, CAC Therapists Diane Vines and Michelle Rose and NCL Volunteers.



CAC Forensic Interviewer *Lisa Holcomb* and summer campers load the bus on their way to Camp Estelle

Back to School

Celebrating a return to classes in August, more than 200 children and family members attended The Children's Assessment Center 2005 Back to School (BTS) Party sponsored by ConocoPhillips and Whole Foods. School supplies can be really fun when backpacks are coupled with free Astros tickets inside... Partners for the 2005 BTS Party included:

- ConocoPhillips
- Baylor Medical Clinic
- City Dance Studio
- Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
- Harris County Sheriff's Office
- Houston Astros
- Houston Texans
- Supercuts
- Texas Children's Hospital
- Whole Foods
- Youth Advocates Hip Hop Dancers

In addition to school supplies, BTS participants received medical evaluations and immunizations to keep them healthy throughout the year. Meanwhile, Texan's Mascot Toro and Texans Cheerleaders were on hand to keep things festive. Fun was had by kids and grown-ups alike as children prepared for their return to school... Lisa Baldwin-Andrews, Laura Broussard and Karen Kennard led a group of CAC volunteers, including a large contingent from Bikers Against Child Abuse. Kristina Gomez and Miguel Galan were also part of The CAC's "Back to School Brigade."



CAC Interviewer *Aimee McAndrew*, hands out supplies at the Annual Back to School Party in August

Innocence Lost



FBI Houston Division Special Agent In-Charge, *Rod Beverly* presents CAC Executive Director *Elaine Stolte* with award of appreciation as partner in training for the Innocence Lost Initiative.

On May 10th, The Children's Assessment Center partnered with the Houston Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) with coordination of a two-day conference on the subject of child prostitution.

FBI Special Agent Patrick Fransen, and Assistant Special Agent in Charge Colleen

Conyngham worked closely with CAC Training Coordinator Karen Kennard to organize the training.

According to the FBI website, "more than 300,000 children a year are forced into prostitution, where they're exploited in an organized fashion, extending across state lines."

Approximately 100 attendees from a variety of child advocacy, child protection, law enforcement and criminal justice organizations attended the training. Topics included:

- Dynamics of Child Prostitution
- Investigative / Intervention Techniques
- Interviewing Perpetrators of Sexual Exploitation

Following the training, The Children's Assessment Center hosted a reception to announce and discuss a new FBI Initiative; "Innocence Lost." Rod Beverly, Special Agent in Charge of the Houston Division of the FBI, provided opening remarks, followed by brief presentations from experts on the subject of child prostitution.

The "Innocence Lost" Initiative brings a variety of federal, state and local child protection and law enforcement officials together who are unified in addressing and eradicating child prostitution. Among those attending the reception at The CAC were representatives from the Houston Division of the FBI, Judges, Harris County Family and Juvenile Court, U.S. Congress, U.S. Attorney's Office, Houston City Council, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), and Harris County Protective Services Administration.

The reception audience was treated to a recap of the training and discussion regarding the scope of child prostitution in U.S. cities, as well as a dialogue of next steps.



Volunteer Appreciation!!

On April 28th, The Children's Assessment Center hosted its annual Volunteer Appreciation Reception in the 3rd floor reception area of The CAC. The annual event gives us time to stop and offer a heartfelt thanks to each and every individual who provide thousands of hours of direct service care to the children we serve throughout the year. Volunteers gathered for cocktails, dinner, and musical entertainment provided by The Harbor Lights Choir from the Salvation Army.

CAC Foundation Board President-Elect Yolanda Green served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the evening, first introducing Karen Kennard, who then introduced a slide show presentation including pictures of volunteers in action here at The CAC. Ms. Green then introduced the evening's Keynote Speaker; Channel 11 News Anchor Lisa Foronda. Ms. Foronda shared her own experience with volunteerism and spoke emotionally about the value of being a volunteer.

Following dinner, Ms. Green introduced Volunteer and Youth Services Coordinator Lisa Baldwin-Andrews. Offering recognition to The CAC's

Americorp Volunteers, Lisa presented each volunteer with special certificates of appreciation. Providing timely assistance were CAC Children's Services staff members Kristina Gomez and Miguel Galan.

Closing remarks from CAC Outreach Director John Gatlin followed another rousing session of musical inspiration from The Harbor Light Choir. Gatlin quoted Dr. Martin Luther King, who said "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'" Fortunately, the volunteers at The CAC have a ready answer!



KHOU News Anchor Lisa Foronda gives a passionate speech at last Spring's Volunteer Reception.

Thank You!

Behind the Bench The National Basketball Wives Association Announces The 2006

Touching a Life Gala

Benefiting The Children's Assessment Center

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

- Partner with The CAC & Behind the Bench as an All-Star Underwriter
- Purchase sponsorship tables or individual tickets
- Purchase a Program Ad
- In-kind donations

February 17, 2006

Intercontinental Houston Hotel
Gala, Celebrity Fashion Show & Silent Auction
Gala Chair: Sandra Short

General Questions

Lisa L. Bourgoynne
(713) 986-3536

Underwriting

Susan K. Williams
(713) 986-3483

Team Excellence Award



Detective Tim Brinson receives the CAC's of Texas Team Excellence Award for Law Enforcement from Officer Kevin Brownlee. Brownlee is a member of the Texas Attorney General's Office.

Centers™ of Texas Team Excellence Award for 2005.

Having acknowledged the merits of collaboration when working with abused children, Tim Brinson and other Team Excellence Award winners bring excellence from their respective fields of endeavor to the multidisciplinary team approach within their own children's advocacy centers throughout Texas.

The Children's Assessment Center would like to congratulate Detective Tim Brinson and the other winners of the 2005 Team Excellence Award Winners and Honorable Mention recipients.

*Children's Advocacy Centers™ of
Texas Team Excellence Award*

\$80,000+

Harris County Community & Economic Development Department
State of Texas - Office of the Governor

\$25,000+

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Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
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Holidays and Happy Happenings

 **Harris County Sheriff's Office Toy Delivery – November 30th**
Using an 18-wheeler, The Harris County Sheriff's Office will once again deliver toys and holiday smiles to 500 children served at The CAC. Volunteers are needed to sort toys delivered by The Sheriff's Office.

 **Holiday Toy Drive – Through December 20th**
During the holiday season, The CAC is transformed into a winter wonderland. The annual giving program provides gifts and toys for 1,700 children who receive services at The CAC. Each child completes a wish list and the community has the opportunity to "adopt" a child and complete their wish list or hold a toy drive to collect gifts for the children. Volunteers are needed throughout the holiday season to help sort gifts.

 **The CAC Children's Holiday Party – Wednesday, December 14th**
To make the holiday season bright for the children and families served at The CAC, a holiday party is held on site complete with Santa Claus and his sleigh, arts and crafts projects, cookie decorating, face painting, a dance floor and DJ, popcorn, hotdogs and much more. Volunteers are needed for preparations before and after the Holiday Bash.

For all CAC Holiday activities information, please call: Lisa Baldwin-Andrews at 713-986-3459.

 **Behind The Bench – National Basketball Wives Association Presents:
The 2006 Touching A Life Gala on February 17th, 2006**

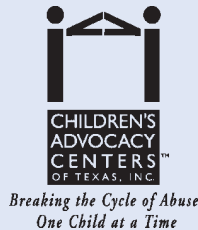
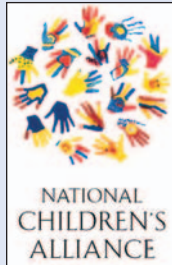
To be held at The Intercontinental Houston Hotel and featuring a Gala, Fashion Show and Silent Auction. For additional information, please call Lisa Bourgoyne at 713-986-3536 or Susan Williams at 713-986-3483 for more information.

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Deer Park Police Department
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Stock Room/Mail Clerk
Charlene O'Brien
Billing Specialist
Susan Odiombo
Forensic Interviewer
Teresa Olivo
Family Services Technician
Mickey Patrick
Technical Services
Technician
Judy Rambur, Ph.D.
Licensed Psychologist,
Supervisor of Therapy &
Psychological Services
Meli Reyna
Family Services Technician

Beatriz Rivera
Custodian of Records
Cheryl Robinson
Psychology Intern
Michelle Rose, LMSW
Bilingual Clinical
Social Worker
Betsey Runge, CPA
Chief Financial Officer
Teresa Scott
Psychology Intern
Mary Ellen Sherrill, LCSW
Supervisor of Therapy &
Psychological Services
Stacey Shuler
Referral Specialist
Cassie Smith, MA, LMFTA
Therapist
Karen Sullivan, LMSW
Therapist
Ivee Syon
Forensic Interviewer
Susan Szczygielski, LCSW
Assistant Director of
Therapy & Psychological
Services
Alexis Tate, LMSW
Clinical Social Worker
Christelyn Thompson
Administrative Support
Technician
Lawrence Thompson Jr., Ph.D.
Director of Therapy &
Psychological Services
Alberta Torres, LCSW
Supervisor of Bilingual
Therapy Services
Tammy Urban
Supervisor of
Interviewing Services
Diane Vines, MA, LPC, LMFTA
Therapist
Susan Williams
Director of Development



*Senator Cornyn visits with a group of CAC Executive Directors
from Texas at the National Children's Alliance Leadership
Conference in Washington, D.C.*



The Children's Assessment Center
The John M. O'Quinn Campus
2500 Bolsover, Houston, TX 77005
Phone: 713-986-3300
Fax: 713-986-3553
www.cachouston.org

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